

2003
Annual Progress and Services Report
for the Consolidated Child & Family Services Plan

Section 3

Planning

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

3.1 Joint Planning

Legal Reference

42 USC622(a)

45 CFR 1357.15(b)(4)

As a recipient of federal funds under Title IV-B, subpart 1 and 2, Title IV-E Independent Living initiatives of the Social Security Act, the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), the Department of Social Services assures that the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) is developed jointly via a state-federal effort.

Team membership includes representatives of the state agency, the U. S Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and numerous community stakeholders from various disciplines.

The CFSP, contained herein, is the document used by the state and federal agencies to describe the children and family services program in Louisiana and to reflect an ongoing process of long and short term planning for the Agency's various initiatives. This description includes:

- ! Vision Statement
- ! Long-range goals
- ! Service descriptions
- ! Program analyses and assessments
- ! Program enhancements
- ! Staff development and training plan
- ! ***Programmatic Action Agenda***
- ! Outcome measures
- ! Compliance data, including data incorporated from the accreditation and continuous quality improvement processes
- ! Changing demographics in the communities served

**COA
G2.4**

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

3.2 Consolidation of Child & Family Services Plan

A. Plan Development

Legal Reference

42 USC622(a)(b)

45 CFR 1357.15(d)

45 CFR 1357.15(a)(4)

The Department of Social Services (DSS), Office of Community Services (OCS) utilizes a variety of approaches to determine the focus and development of a comprehensive CFSP. Information generated via child welfare community forums, community stakeholder meetings, Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) “roll out” **and ongoing inter-governmental implementation (SAFE Act Task Force)** meetings, professional and community

organizations and advisory boards assists the Agency’s assessments of unmet needs and service gaps. Other evaluative tools include: State-Federal planning initiatives, legislative audits, state/federal legislative or judicial mandates, internal agency **Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Processes**, quality assurance reviews and strategic planning. Through these tools, the Agency identifies operational objectives for each fiscal year. In addition, the Agency uses these processes to rank its needs and examine the effectiveness of its service delivery system.

Over time, a consolidated plan is instrumental in the development of a comprehensive child and family service system which is accessible, coordinated, flexible, built on and linked to community services and supports, and able to serve children and their families in a more effective and responsive way.

The two Title IV-B programs are consolidated with the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence (CFCIP) Program and the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) program:

- ! Child welfare services and promoting safe and stable families services are a part of the child and family services continuum; and,
- ! Services rendered through the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and the CAPTA initiatives are administered by the same agency and address common problems of the same population of children and families.

This consolidation will facilitate ongoing coordination, consultation, and joint planning efforts among these programs and assist the state in moving toward a more comprehensive service delivery system.

B. Process

Legal Reference

La. R. S. 24:603(1)
653(F), 655

Intrinsic to the development of the CFSP is the strategic planning process and the resultant plan formulated by the Agency. Strategic planning is a mechanism that enables the Agency to determine a solid direction for itself and to set its own guideposts for the future— short and long term. Additionally, it allows the Agency to look at where it

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

is, decide where it wants to be, develop a strategy to get there, check its progress along the way and make changes as necessary. In essence, the process includes six steps:

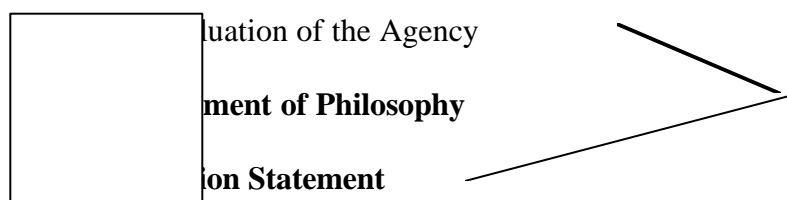
Steps 1 & 2 facilitate looking inside the organization to evaluate its problem areas, outstanding qualities, values, and attitudes.

Steps 3 & 4 mold the main thrust of the organization into a broad statement of purpose and identify key results that the organization wants to accomplish.

Steps 5,6 & 7 set the specific guidelines for assuring that the organization accomplishes what it wants, develops time frames and action steps to measure accountability and resource allocations.

A graphic depiction of the six steps are as follows:

STEP 1 - Identify Strengths and Weaknesses



! The focus of the Agen

STEP 4 - Objectives

STEP 5 - Strategies

! Action to be ...

STEP 6 - Action Plan

STEP 7 - Accountability and Resource Allocation

The resultant strategic plan for the OCS is executed by the Assistant Secretary and staff of the Agency. The plan is merged with the executive budget documents prepared for the Executive Director of the Children's Cabinet, Secretary of Department of Social Services, Commissioner of the Division of Administration, and the Governor. These officials use this information to support an informed, long-range approach to decision-making and management. The executive budget also is reviewed by the Louisiana Legislature to assist in policy making and financial planning during its annual sessions.

C. Consultation

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

The initial development of this plan involved a broad-based consultation process which included the participation of a variety of people from all parts of the state concerned with improving service delivery to children and families. Efforts were made to enlist the support of people in both the public and private sectors, including federal, state and local public and private agencies and community-based organizations; representatives of professional and advocacy organizations and, parents and other consumers. Information was obtained that described the status of child and family services, gaps in services and the most important needs that should be addressed.

The initial consultation and development process of the CFSP coordinated with the efforts of the Community Integrated Services System (CISS) grant entitled "Home Visiting for At-Risk Families Initiatives" received by the Louisiana Office of Public Health, Maternal and Child Health, 1994-1995; the Louisiana Families for Kids project funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation; and the Louisiana's Kids Count project. The State of Louisiana Court Evaluation Project and Housing and Urban Development planning in Orleans Parish were also included.

The consultation process also involved the use of internal sources which included the Louisiana Children's Cabinet and personal interviews of state officials. In addition, external input was gathered from a wide array of local, tribal and community-based agencies and organizations as well as the federal government through Region VI, Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. Parents, foster parents, representatives of professional and advocacy organizations, individual practitioners, the courts, academicians, front line workers, and agency administrators were also included. Data was collected from targeted focus groups, community forums, family forums, telephone interviews of judges and attorneys, a local government telephone survey, and a mail survey of service providers.

Each year since the initial development of this plan, the Agency seeks input from stakeholders for plan development and improvement of agency services. The following information details some of the actions taken to obtain and use input from stakeholders.

! Public Hearing

On March 6, 2003, the Agency held its annual public hearing for the APSR. The community was invited to the public hearing by several means: a public notice was published in the Potpourri section of the Louisiana Register and in the seven leading newspapers of the state; letters were sent to individuals who had in the past expressed interest in the planning process; and stakeholders as they attended meetings with Agency personnel were told of the upcoming hearing. Several individuals received sections of the 2002 APSR for their review. Further, copies of 1999-2004 Child and Families Services Plan and the 2002 Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) were available for review in

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

each regional and parish OCS office. Copies of both documents were also present in the state library and its 37 repositories statewide. A request was submitted to the Appeals Bureau of the Department of Social Services for an Administrative Law Judge to be present at the hearing. These efforts did result in the attendance of six individuals at the hearing, plus the submission of suggestions for revising the APSR for 2003.

During the hearing of March 6, 2003, several individuals made statements and offered suggestions. The following will provide a brief review of the statements and suggestions:

Ms. Pat Arnould of the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs stated that several tribes are excited about the opportunity of the Agency taking a more active role in working with the tribes on child protection issues. In specific, Ms. Arnould was planning to meet with Ms. Carmen Weisner, Assistant Secretary of OCS, to organize a meeting (this meeting was later held on 04/03/2003, see page 20 of Section 3 for details of the meeting).

A question arose as to why some programs operate only on the regional level. An example was given of a healthy start program in the Monroe region. It was noted in response that some areas have different needs and also some regions have different resources available.

A recommendation was made that OCS retain an employee who could write grants for federal and private funds. This employee should work with community stakeholders in writing these grants. It was further suggested that Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds could be combined to receive matching funds from foundations.

There was a recommendation that the Agency sponsor one day intensive training sessions on selected topics. Presently, it was felt that the Agency only support programs that provide short sessions on topics within the context of a larger program area. An example is the yearly Kids Are Worth It Conference. A participant in the Hearing noted that in the Lake Charles region such a one day training session had been held.

Ms. Tamara Indest of the state's CASA program stated that CASA offers trainings that would benefit foster parents. She also said that CASA would like to take part in the discussions on American Indian issues.

It was noted that requests for proposals (RFP) only consider proposals from individuals with MSW degrees. It was recommended that RFP proposals also include other degrees.

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

CASA would like to team with OCS to provide services to families when an investigation uncovers problems but the report is determined to be invalid or valid with services provided and later the case closed. CASA would like to be added as a referral source.

A CASA representative noted that their relationship with OCS was positive in most cases. However, in a particular parish there seems to be real tension, resulting in a failure to receive needed information.

It was suggested that OCS look at diversifying funds. Federal funds may be available for matching with 10% to 25% of state funds. This would allow for new initiatives if this funding source could be used.

!

Federal Stakeholder Consultation

The Planning and Accreditation Section along with Agency and community members of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Statewide Assessment Task Force met with the Federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF) representative on February 21, 2003. The purpose of this session was to provide an overview of the Child and Family Services Review. The ACF emphasized the outcomes and systemic factors that the Review will focus upon. Also noted was that the review will likely indicate that the agency needs improvement in meeting the outcomes and systemic factors. Consequently, it was noted by the ACF representative that the Agency will need to engage in an extensive planning process which will be presented to ACF in a Program Improvement Plan.

!

Update on Community Stakeholder Consultation for 2002 APSR

During the 2002 planning cycle, community stakeholders reviewed the previous years (2001) APSR and made suggestions for improvement. The suggestions and OCS response during 2002 and 2003 are as follows:

- 1. The community lacks information regarding how the Agency makes decisions regarding reports on abuse and neglect. The educational process should start with students in social work and related fields being exposed to various parts of the child protection system. A natural entry point for this type of education was seen as the Title IV-E programs in the universities.*
- 2. Recommendations were made to improve American Indian tribal relations and to work more closely with Pat Arnould of the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs. Since April 2002, a number of initiatives have occurred: Ms. Arnould continues to take an active role in the Agency's*

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

COA
G2.3.02
G2.3.03

Continuous Quality Improvement process through its Consumers and Community/Stakeholders Committee; by her invitation, agency personnel in December 2002 took part in a training program on establishing a child protection team sponsored by American Indians tribes. In the spring of 2003, Ms. Arnould requested a meeting with OCS staff to discuss child welfare policy as it relates to American Indians tribes. This meeting was held on April 3, 2003. Additionally, in 2003, the CIP/CARE team discussed the need for more training opportunities for judges to understand ICWA implications for their functions. Planning for the occurred at the May 2003 SAFE ACT Task Force Meeting.

3. *Community stakeholders suggested that OCS include public awareness activities as a budget item. Mr. Anthony Ellis, media relations contact for OCS, is in the process of developing a public awareness plan in response to stakeholder participation and the state level CQI Committee.*

!

Consumer and Community Involvement in Planning for 2003

The Agency has made many efforts to seek input from consumers and stakeholders in the planning process. The Agency recognizes the importance of this input and has sought it in the following ways:

1. *The Agency organized a Consumers and Community Committee as part of the ongoing effort toward accreditation by the Council on Accreditation. This committee is currently a subcommittee of Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI). The committee consists of community stakeholders, consumers, and agency staff. There are currently ten such committees throughout the state and one statewide committee. The committees are designed to learn about Agency functioning, evaluate issues and problems, and offer suggestions to the CQI organizing committee.*

The present committee offered several suggestions in the areas of cultural sensitivity, public education, and advocacy. Further, the committee took an active role in writing an agency statement on cultural sensitivity. In the future, the Agency believes that the stakeholders committee will take part in addressing a wide range of issues affecting all program areas.

2. *Surveys were developed as part of the self-study process for COA. Surveys were initially submitted to consumers and staff as a part of the COA self-study process. Additionally, satisfaction survey have been created and submitted through mail to agency staff, stakeholders, and*

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

have also been placed in lobbies of all OCS offices. These surveys are helpful in giving feedback to the staff regarding their relationships with clients and the community and in identifying areas needing improvement.

COA
2.3.03

Needs and Capacities - Baseline Information

The development of previous plans involved the use of indices of need to develop baseline information. Initially, the information gathered in 1995 was used two ways. First, it formed part of the input to the community forums, allowing communities a statistical view of their parishes. Second, the information was put into a set of databases which allowed for detailed analysis and comparison of the parishes. The eight indices of needs identified were as follows: a child welfare needs index; a maternal and child health index; an educational needs index; a poverty index; a poverty risk index; juvenile justice index; homelessness index; substance abuse index; and child and family needs index. The scores on these indices were used to allocate funds to ten high need parishes for Family Preservation/Family Support (FP/FS) services. The baseline information gathered statewide allowed the Agency to measure progress in accomplishing programmatic goals and objectives within the CFSP service continuum and to identify emerging trends and new populations experiencing problems. It also provided a guide for ongoing decisions about resources and services to children and families at the community level.

Two reports by the Division of Administration, one in 2002 and the other in 2003, provide indicators of economic and social well-being in Louisiana. The indicators in the studies include: poverty status, unemployment rate, per capita income, out of wedlock births, female headed households and education. The report reveals clear relationships between the variables included in this study. They are as follows:

Poverty Status

- \$ Certain northern and river parishes had elevated poverty rates in all study years.
- \$ More parishes had high relative concentrations of poor populations in 1997 than in 1993, although the rates were themselves lower.
- \$ Areas that had high overall poverty rates also saw correspondingly high rates of poverty among children.
- \$ Child poverty rates did decrease throughout the state. Only 18 parishes had more than one-third of their children living in poverty in 1997, compared with 31 parishes in 1993.
- \$ *The poverty rate for all individuals was 19.6% while for children ages 5-17, it was 25.8%.*

Unemployment Rate

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

\$ *Louisiana's unemployment rate in December 2002 was 6.3%, only slightly higher than the national rate of 6%.*

\$ 34 LA parishes saw an increase in unemployment between 2000 and 2001, with 13 parishes having double-digit growth in the percent of people not working.

\$ Unemployment declined in 26 parishes in the same period with Lafayette experiencing the sharpest decrease (-44.8%).

\$ Rural parishes were particularly susceptible to elevated unemployment rates in the study period.

\$ *Parishes with the highest unemployment are located in rural, sparsely populated regions in the northern part of the state.*

Per Capita Income

\$ The state's 2000 per capita income level ranked only 46th in the nation and was just 78% of the national average.

\$ Income gaps between the rich and the poor continue to widen across the nation.

\$ Generally, urban parishes had income levels that exceeded the state average. Yet several of these parishes also had high poverty rates, indicating that widening income gaps exist within the state.

Out-of-Wedlock Births

\$ Both the state and the nation saw slight increases in out-of-wedlock childbearing and slight decreases in the teen birth rate.

\$ The northeastern parishes and certain urban parishes, such as Orleans, experienced very high out-of-wedlock and teen birth rates.

\$ Both overall and child poverty rates have a strong positive correlation with out-of-wedlock and teen childbearing. In short, these birth rates rise in tandem with poverty rates.

Female-Headed Households

\$ The percentage of female-headed households declined in the nation and in the state between 1990 and 2000. In spite of this decline, more LA parishes fell in the higher end of the scale in 2000 than in 1990.

\$ Nationwide, one-fourth of single mothers were poor in 2000 compared to 5% of two-parent households. In LA, the percent of female-headed households was positively correlated with higher child poverty levels.

\$ In 2000, LA ranked third in the nation with 29.3% of its children living in single parent homes.

\$ Northeastern parishes have particularly high levels of female-headed households with the notable exception of West Carroll parish.

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

Education

\$ Dropout rates fell between 1996-1997 and 1999-2000, with double-digit rates occurring in only one parish in 1999-2000 compared with 10 parishes in 1996-1997.

\$ Generally, more 8th grade students failed the Math section of the LEAP test than the English section ***with 31% unsatisfactory in Math while 15% were unsatisfactory in English. Poorer parishes generally had higher failure rates than more affluent parishes.***

\$ Dropout rates tended to increase across parishes as performance on the 8th grade English and Math tests worsened.

\$ The average grade of completion for dropouts was 9.8. The trends described above and the fact that students were more likely to leave high school before entering the 10th grade suggest that these dropouts also probably failed the 8th grade LEAP test.

These reports will be useful in determining which parishes exhibit greater need than others. Baseline information gathered statewide allows the Agency to measure progress in accomplishing programmatic goals, objectives, and outcomes within the service continuum. Additionally, this information assists in identifying emerging trends and new populations experiencing problems. It guides on-going decisions about targeting resources and services to children and families.

Additional information regarding Louisiana was obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau. The information is as follows:

Income (2000) - \$10,000 - \$14,999 (9%), \$15,000 - \$24,999 (16%), \$25,000 - \$34,000 (13%), \$35,000 or more (45%)

Gender (2000) - Total population 4,468,976; Male (48.4%), Female (51.6%)

Age (2000) - Under 18 years (27.3%), 18-24 years (10.6%), 25-44 years (28.9%), 45-64 years (21.6%), 65 years + (11.6%)

Major language groups (1990) - 5 years and over -3,886,353; English (89.9%), Spanish (1.9%), other (8.2%)

Racial/Ethnic Composition (2000) - American Indian/Alaskan Native (0.57%), Asian (1.23%), African American (32.49%), Hispanic/Latino (2.41%), Pacific Islander (0.03%), White (63.91%), other (0.70%)

Major Religious Groups (1990) - Total adherents 2,975,409; Catholic (46.02%), Jewish (0.53%), Protestant (52.55%), other (0.90%), Muslim (not listed).

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

3.3 Ongoing Inclusive Consultation and Collaborative Process

Over the five-year operational period of the CFSP efforts such as the following initiatives will continue to be made to ensure the continued involvement of the broad-based constituency that has participated in the planning process.

A. Louisiana Law Institute -- Children's Code Committee

The Louisiana legislature utilizes the Law Institute to engage in continuous review and recommendation for updating Louisiana Law. The Children's Code Committee is composed of juvenile court judges; district court judges; assistant district attorneys; private defense attorneys; representatives of the state Departments of Education, Public Safety and Corrections, Health and Hospitals, and Social Services. Individuals with concerns about the law as it applies to children and families in juvenile matters often appear at Children's Code meetings to make recommendations for revision. The Court Improvement Project is chaired by a juvenile judge who is a charter member of the Children's Code Committee members which provides continuity across these two collaborative efforts for improvement of Louisiana juvenile justice system.

B. Interagency Service Coordination Process (ISC)

ISC refers to the multi-agency planning and service coordination process for providing appropriate and coordinated services to families who care for children with severe emotional or behavioral problems and who are at risk of out-of-home or out-of-school placement. The goals of ISC are to develop and coordinate community-based systems of care that emphasize comprehensive and individualized services; to keep the child in the most family-like setting appropriate to his needs; and to reduce the use of out-of-school and out-of-home placements. Representatives from the Department of Social Services (OCS and Louisiana Rehabilitation Services); Department of Education (Office of Special Educational Services); Department of Public Safety & Corrections (Office of Youth Development); and Department of Health and Hospitals (Office of Mental Health Services, Office of Citizen's with Developmental Disabilities, Office of Addictive Disorders and Office of Public Health) comprise the ten regional teams and the State administrative team.

The regional and state team members ensure involvement of the client(s) and their family as ISC case specific members. Local resources currently serving, or with a potential for serving, the child and family are integral to the team composition. Issues are initially addressed at the regional level and referred to the state level team if assistance is needed for resolution. The state team consists of a representative from each of the aforementioned agencies. The regional representative presents the information to the state level team and this team then develops and signs a plan for implementation. If additional services are needed, the state level team refers the plan to the regional team for followup.

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

C. State Mental Health Planning Council

The advisory council oversees and monitors the state plan implemented by the Office of Mental Health. This council serves as an advocate for children, youth and adults with serious emotional impairments or mental illness; monitors, reviews and evaluates the allocation and adequacy of mental health services within the state. Membership consists of representatives from the state agencies serving this population, consumers, family members, advocates, providers, state legislators and other interested parties and groups.

D. ChildNet

ChildNet refers to the state's early intervention program for infants and toddlers with disabilities under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Part C is a federal program which requires participating states to develop and implement a statewide, comprehensive, interagency coordinated system of early intervention services for children, ages birth to three years old, and their families. Interagency agreements among the Departments of Education, Health and Hospitals, and Social Services delineates the administrative structure for service delivery, resource commitments and coordination at the regional and local level. ChildNet is administered by the Department of Education, Division of Special Populations. Multi-agency and multi-disciplinary advisory councils (which include parents, advocates and other community participants) at the local, regional, and state level oversee the planning, development and implementation of the program. These councils also assist in identifying and accessing resources and monitor the appropriateness and adequacy of service delivery.

E. The President's Committee on Mental Retardation (PCMR), Louisiana Team

PCMR was created to advise the President and Secretary of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services on a broad range of topics relating to mental retardation. The Louisiana Team convened in the fall of 1995 to develop an action plan and targeted strategies within the state that would facilitate full and life-long inclusion of people with mental retardation and related developmental disabilities (MR/DD) in all aspects of community living. Team membership representing over 60 major stakeholder groups involved in the lives of persons with MR/DD includes past and present consumers of MR public facilities; parents of consumers; and representatives from the business community, the Governor and Legislature, state governmental agencies, public and private providers, advocacy groups and the Louisiana Health Care Campaign. Paramount to OCS's participation in this endeavor is to make sure the PCMR state plan encompasses strategies that support children with developmental disabilities to be reared in their natural homes, where appropriate and possible, and, where not possible, support them to be reared in informed, supported substitute or adoptive families who are specially trained; ensure coordination of supports and services for children that will increase their overall well-being; and ensure their protection from abuse, neglect, mistreatment and

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

exploitation regardless of their living arrangement. In spring of 2001, the Agency team members coordinated a presentation on children in crisis with a focus on neglect as it relates to developmental delays. *The agency representative attends meetings as notified.*

F. Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD), Strategic 5-Year Plan

The OCDD, within the Department of Health and Hospitals, is the state agency that has responsibility for providing community-based and institutional services to individuals with mental retardation or other developmental disabilities. Recommendations submitted by the Louisiana PCMR Team served as the framework for developing a strategic plan to be implemented by OCDD during the next five years. OCS had significant, direct involvement in this planning process at the regional and state levels.

G. Community and Family Support System Task Force

This multi-disciplinary advisory group oversees the implementation of Act 378 which is a state statute authorizing the formulation of comprehensive, coordinated systems of individualized supports for children and adults with disabilities and their families. The community and family support system seeks to provide an array of services to support families that will enable a family to keep their child at home; and, to provide a range of supports to assist adults to live within their communities. Service delivery and financial benefits are coordinated through specified agencies within the Departments of Social Services and Health and Hospitals.

H. Families in Need of Services (FINS)

The Families in Need of Services (FINS) program was established under Title VII of the Louisiana Children's Code as a court diversionary initiative to coordinate the efforts of public institutions or agencies having responsibility to provide services to a youth referred for court intervention. Staff designated by the courts as FINS Intake Officers receive referrals from schools, social service agencies, and the general community regarding children considered ungovernable, who run away, who are truant, or engage in other childhood destructive behaviors. A meeting consisting of the child and family members, Intake Officer, agency staff and other individuals having direct involvement with the family is held to develop a family services plan. The intent is to assess and identify problems early, and put services into place to help resolve family difficulties; thereby, avoiding court intervention or placement of the child outside the family's home.

Although the program was created in 1992 and implemented statewide in 1993, state funds were not appropriated until 1995 to assist Judicial Districts with the costs of FINS. State fund appropriations for calendar years 1996 through 2000 were placed in the budget of OCS for disbursement to the 41 Judicial Districts. In 1996 funds remaining after the distribution were used by OCS to contract with the Agenda for Children to develop and

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

implement statewide training for the FINS Intake Officers. OCS also contracted funds to the Louisiana FINS Association in 1999 through 2000 to provide additional statewide training for FINS staff and social services agencies staff. It should be noted that state dollars appropriated for the FINS program are used for Federal financial participation in the Family Preservation/Family Support (FP/FS) program authorized under Title IV-B subpart 2, of the Social Security Act.

Since the 2000-2001 contract year, the funds for 41 Judicial Districts are administered by the Louisiana Supreme Court. The funds distributed to each court will be based upon data collection which is also being implemented by the Louisiana Supreme Court. The goal of the project is to provide outcome data to determine the effectiveness of the FINS Program.

I. Missing Children Comprehensive Action Program (M/CAP)

The Missing Children Comprehensive Action Program (M/CAP) was a multidisciplinary team representing 13 federal, state and local agencies established in East Baton Rouge in 1995. The purpose of this group, funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, was to serve as a vehicle for improving community response to child victims and their families. While the M/CAP team no longer exists, this group has changed its original focus from missing and exploited children to establishing a Child Advocacy Center for the Baton Rouge metropolitan area. ***The center has opened and there are plans to expand to provide treatment to victims and the families.***

J. Louisiana Children's Network

The Louisiana Children's Network is housed in the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement and provides a website that lists the missing and runaway children in Louisiana, who are also listed in the National Center of Missing and Exploited Children's data base. The Network was created by an advisory board of which OCS was an active member. The website also provides linkages to other websites for missing children including the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. Plans are to provide greater access to parents of missing children in Louisiana by creating posters of their children for local and nationwide dissemination.

K. Children's Justice Act Task Force

The Louisiana Children's Justice Act Task Force is a multi-disciplinary group of professionals with knowledge and experience related to the criminal justice system and the issues of child abuse and neglect. The Task Force is responsible for making recommendations on the utilization of the Children's Justice Act Grant funds awarded to the state. Grants awarded are to be used to develop, establish, and operate programs

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

designed to improve the handling of child abuse and neglect cases, particularly cases of child sexual abuse and exploitation, in a manner which limits additional trauma to the child victim; the handling of cases of suspected child abuse or neglect related fatalities; and the investigation and prosecution of cases of child abuse and neglect.

L. Louisiana Children's Trust Fund

The Louisiana Children's Trust Fund (LCTF) funds primary and secondary prevention programs. Priority is given to community based programs serving under-served, low income areas with emphasis on programs for young parents and parents with young children. Efforts are made to assure equal distribution of funds among rural and urban areas. Grants are offered regionally on a competitive basis. The formula for dividing funds in awarding grants is based on incidence of child abuse and neglect per capita. The formula is determined by both the number of child abuse and neglect reports in a region and the population of the region.

The LCTF is governed by a Board of Directors which is itself a multi-disciplinary collaboration of representation from public and private sectors. There are state government representatives from the Department of Social Services, Child Protection, Education, Juvenile Corrections and the university community. The private business sector includes representatives from the Medical Society, Juvenile and Family Court, Judges, Bar Association, NASW, and National Business League (Urban League). The private grass-roots representatives (families and participants) include NAACP, NAEYC (child care workers and parents), Chamber of Commerce, and the religious community.

M. Louisiana Child Death Review Panel

The Agency staff serve on the state and local Child Death Review Panels (CDRP) which are a multi-disciplinary group of trained professionals charged with the responsibility of reviewing unexpected child deaths occurring in children under the age of 15. The Office of Public Health hired 9 safety coordinators to develop local panels throughout the state.

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

3.4 Coordination With Title XX, Title IV-E and Other Relevant State Programs

Legal Reference

42 USC622(b)(1)(A)
42 USC622(b)(2)
45 CFR1357.15(d)(2)

In addition to supervising the delivery of services to children and families, the OCS is the designated State Services Agency for administering Title IV-E and Social Service Block Grant (Title XX) of the Social Security Act and amendments. Since services under these programs are managed as a single organizational unit, these and other relevant state programs (e.g. Children's Trust Fund, and Emergency Shelter Grants) are coordinated at the state, regional, and local levels to effectively provide comprehensive, community-based services and programs for children and families.

The intent of social services programs maintained by OCS is to protect the safety of children and to provide services to at-risk children, families and individuals within the state. The services are directed at preventing or remedying neglect, abuse and exploitation, and promoting self-sufficiency, self-support, and rehabilitation. Many of these essential social services are provided without regard to income to individuals who need the specified service.

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

3.5 Coordination by State with American Indian Tribal Organizations

Legal Reference

42 USC622(b)
45 CFR1357.15(d)(1)
45 CFR1357.15(1)(3)(r)
P.L. 103-432

Louisiana has four federally recognized Indian (American Indian) tribes. The total population of these tribes is 558 persons which is .6% of the total population of Louisiana.

*In preparing this section of the APSR, the assistance of Pat Arnould, Deputy Director of the Office of Indian Affairs, was requested. Ms. Arnould reviewed this section and recommended

that the term Native American be changed to American Indian. ***It should be noted that Ms. Arnould is currently a member of the Agency's state level Consumer and Community/Stakeholder Committee.***

Federal Tribes

**COA
G2.2**

Chitimacha Tribe
(St. Mary Parish)
P. O. Box 661
Charenton, LA 70523
(337) 923-7215
Al Leblanc, Chairman

Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana
(Allen Parish)
P. O. Box 818
Elton, LA 70432
(337) 584-2261
Lovelin Poncho, Chairman

Tunica-Biloxi Tribe
(Avoyelles Parish)
P. O. Box 331
Marksville, LA 71351
(318) 253-9767
Earl Barbry, Chairman

Jena Band of Choctaw
(Grant, Rapides, & Lasalle Parishes)
P. O. Box 14
Jena, LA 71342
(318) 992-2717
Cheryl Smith, Chairman

The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) primarily accords certain protections to federally recognized tribes. The State via this agency is cognizant of the need to be more inclusive of all the differing ethnicities and cultures represented in our local communities. Through its policies and practices the Agency seeks to promote child welfare and social services that will help people develop self-respect, a sense of self-esteem, and a sense of stability and security. The Agency recognizes, in particular, that American Indian tribes are unique and that addressing their problems may require approaches different than the ones used with other racial, ethnic or cultural groups. In compliance with ICWA, the Agency has drafted program policy governing case planning and service delivery as a means to ensure that the cultural heritage and best interest of a child of American Indian heritage are protected. Specific policies and procedures in Appendix A of the Foster Care policy manual address child custody proceedings relating to: family preservation and family support services, tribal notifications when a child enters the state system, tribal jurisdiction, foster care placement, termination of parental rights, pre-adoptive placement, and adoptive placement. In the Agency's "Caseworker Competency" training curriculum, employees are introduced to the program policy which emphasizes the exclusive rights of

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

American Indian tribes and major ICWA requirements which provide for identification of Indian children by the state child welfare services agency; the rights of Indian parents and Tribes to have notice of, and to intervene, in state proceedings involving Indian children; special preference for placement of Indian children with (1) a member of the child's extended family, (2) other members of the Indian child's tribe, or (3) other Indian families; active efforts to prevent the breakup of the Indian family; and use of tribal courts in child welfare matters. Agency mandates for compliance with ICWA provisions are applicable to all American Indian children including those children who are members of, or who are eligible for membership in a tribe located in a state other than Louisiana.

The Agency assures that reasonable efforts will be made to proactively coordinate its state child and family services program with that of Louisiana-based American Indian Tribal Organizations in order to resolve child and family-related crises and connect with necessary and appropriate services. Of the four federally recognized American Indian Tribal Organizations in our state, the Agency has entered into one formal working agreement with the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of the Alexandria region. The working relationship with the Tunica/Biloxi Social Service Department and OCS continues to be positive. All investigations and incidents involving tribal children are discussed with the Social Service Director for the tribe. The tribe continues to have a full-time mental health counselor to provide parenting education, intensive family services, domestic violence prevention and community support/services. The local substance abuse clinic provides in-patient and out-patient substance abuse services to tribal members. The tribe has recently hired a judge to handle court and legal matters.

In January, 2003, the Alexandria region followed up the earlier agreement with a new agreement designed to cover the protection of children of adults who are visiting Grand Casino Avoyelles (which is located on tribal property). The agreement spells out how reports of suspected child abuse and neglect which are reported by the Tunica/Biloxi tribal police will be handled. Further, it shows the cooperative working relationship between the tribe and the regional OCS office.

While the Agency has only entered into one formal working agreement, informal working agreements exist with the other tribes in the State. The Jena Band of Choctaws is the tribe located within the confines of Catahoula/LaSalle Parishes. The tribe is a structured organization with whom OCS has developed a positive, focused working relationship. The tribe has continued to make reports to the Agency when they have had concerns about tribal members, families and children. At any time an American Indian family's child(ren) has been taken into DSS custody, the tribe has continued to defer to agency process and decisions. As they have no judicial system, they defer to the District Court as well. There is ongoing contact between the tribe and the Agency when jointly serving the same families; however, a written agreement has not been completed. In 1994, our Lake Charles regional office drafted a working agreement with the Coushatta Tribe. While that particular draft agreement is still not signed by tribal leaders, our regional office reports that the general terms of the agreement are being followed. The Chitimacha Tribe located in Charenton, Louisiana has an informal working agreement with the Lafayette Regional OCS office which includes consultation with regard to child abuse and

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

neglect investigations, and expert witness testimony in tribal court proceedings. *Also, only families living off the reservation are normally investigated by OCS.* For several years, OCS has maintained a positive working relationship with the tribe. The tribe's Human Services Department, has become very independent in making decisions and very seldom contacts the St. Mary OCS office for assistance. The tribe is notified if OCS receives a complaint regarding an American Indian family not residing on the reservation. At that time, a decision is made between the two agencies with regard to which agency will accept responsibility for completing the investigation.

This year, the Agency received four reports concerning American Indian families whose tribal reservation are in other states. OCS followed Agency and ICWA policy and contacted the tribes in other states. The tribes made no direct interventions and simply requested that OCS communicate with them on a regular basis and send copies of any court documents.

A meeting was held on April 3, 2003, with representatives from OCS and the Jena Band of Choctaw and Coushatta Indian Tribes. Pat Arnould from the Office of Indian Affairs was also present. The meeting was requested by Ms. Arnould as the tribes had questions surrounding certification of foster homes on the reservations. The representatives from the Coushatta Tribe reported that OCS would not certify any of the homes on the reservation as they did not meet the square footage requirement. It was explained that this requirement was made by DSS licensing and it was suggested that the tribes meet with the licensing board so that this and other ICWA related issues could be discussed. OCS agreed to contact the states of Washington and Oklahoma to determine how they address the issue of licensure requirements for the American Indian population.

The Coushatta representatives explained that the Tribal Council is not supportive of placing American Indian children in OCS certified homes as they feel that these families do not understand the culture of the tribe. The decision was made that the tribes prepare a training regarding the American Indian culture and that it be presented to OCS certified families in the area of the reservations. The representatives feel that this will make the Tribal Council more open to placing their children in OCS certified homes.

Another decision that developed from this meeting involved the possible use of Federal National Resource Center Training and Technical Assistance (TA) days to train OCS staff on working effectively with Indian children. The representatives from the two tribes will identify a qualified person to provide the training and OCS will request the TA days for the training. This training will be open to all OCS professional staff.

The Agency will continue to combine the Justice for Children and the Families in the Balance conferences and will request tribal representatives in the planning of the consolidated conference efforts. The CARE/Court Improvement Committee has also identified ICWA as a desirable topic for one of the workshops at this year's conference.

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

It is envisioned that through the activities emanating from family preservation and family support initiatives, *COA* and stakeholder participation in the planning of child welfare services, a meaningful partnership will *continue to be* developed between the Agency and the American Indian community.

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

3.6 Service Matrix

The state of Louisiana will continue its efforts toward developing a unified Child and Family Services Program which encompasses newly targeted parishes and services, as reflected in this plan, as well as existing services already funded under Title IV-B Subpart 1, the Social Services Block Grant, the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, and the Child Abuse and Prevention Treatment Act.

A. Title IV-B, Subpart 1 and Social Services Block Grant (Child Welfare Services)

Services that will continue to be supported under both Title IV-B Subpart 1 and the Social Services Block Grant are:

1. Universal Services
 - a. evaluation of referrals
 - b. assessment of need
 - c. development of service plan
 - d. determination and certification of eligibility
 - e. arrangements for utilization of service
 - f. follow-up
1. Child Protection Investigation
 - a. risk assessment, safety assessment and planning, arrangement of emergency medical care and related services
 - b. emergency removal and placement
 - c. referral to the Family Services Program or other appropriate agency
 - d. short term counseling and acquisition of basic services for families
2. Prevention and Reunification Services
 - a. in-home family-based services
 - b. protective services day care
 - c. homemaker services
 - d. temporary out-of-home placement
 - e. referral to treatment resource
 - f. Preventive Assistance Fund (PAF)
 - g. contracted intensive home-based services
3. Foster Care Services

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

- a. foster family and residential care
 - b. independent living
 - c. permanency efforts
 - d. Reunification Assistance Fund (RAF)
 - e. outreach recruitment/retention, training, and certification
- 5. Adoption Services
 - a. outreach, recruitment/retention, training and certification
 - b. interstate compact on placement of children
 - c. voluntary registry and maintenance of court-sealed records
 - d. ***Adoption Exchange Association (AEA) (funded through Children's Bureau federal funding)***
 - e. subsidized adoption
 - f. interstate compact on adoption and medical assistance
 - g. specialized home recruitment by private agencies
 - h. post adoptive services

B. Title IV-B, Subpart 2 (Promoting Safe and Stable Families as amended by ASFA.)

Family Support and Family Preservation services reauthorized through ASFA have been redefined to include "community-based family support services, time-limited family reunification services, and adoption promotion and support services." Many of the service enhancements listed below are expected to overarch the categories listed in Subpart 1, but are not all inclusive of services provided under this category.

1. Family Support

- a. Child Welfare Family Resource Centers
 - (1) parenting groups
 - (1) support services
 - (2) counseling
 - (3) parenting skills training
 - (4) resource libraries
 - (5) after hours supervision
 - (6) tutoring
 - (7) respite services
 - (8) transportation
 - (9) mentoring
- b. Foster and Adoptive Family Resource Centers
 - (1) respite services (planned)
 - (2) after hours supervision
 - (3) parenting groups

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

- (4) support services
- (5) counseling
- (6) transportation
- c. Risk Assessment
- d. Emergency placement and removal
- e. Referral to Family Services Program or other appropriate agencies
- f. Healthy Start services
- g. OCS Resource Libraries
- h. Preventive Assistance Funds
- i. Reunification Assistance Funds

2. Family Preservation

- a. Child Welfare Family Resource Centers
 - (1) counseling for parents and children
 - (2) intensive family preservation
 - (3) therapy groups
 - (1) respite services (crisis)
 - (2) case management services
 - (3) substance abuse counseling
 - (4) transportation
 - (5) after hours supervision
- b. Foster and Adoptive Family Resource Centers
 - (1) respite services (emergency and crisis)
 - (2) transportation
 - (3) counseling
 - (4) after hours supervision
- c. Protective day care services
- a. In-home family based services
- e. Contracted in-home services
- f. Preventive assistance fund
- g. Reunification Assistance Fund
- h. Foster Parent Kit
- i. Foster Parent Assessment Support Teams (FAST)
- j. Safety equipment for foster homes
- k. OCS Resource Libraries

3. Time-limited Family Reunification Services

- a. Child Welfare Family Resource Centers
- b. Federal Parent Locator Service
- c. In-home family based services
- d. Specialized foster family care

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

- e. Preventive assistance fund
 - f. Reunification assistance fund
 - g. Infant Team Mental Health Projects
 - h. OCS Resource Libraries
 - i. Clearance of TPR backlog
 - j. Intensive family reunification services (Alexandria, Shreveport, and CWFRC in New Orleans)
4. Adoption Promotion and Support Services
- a. Foster and Adoptive Family Resource Centers
 - (1) respite care, *crisis/emergency; maintenance and recreational*
 - (2) counseling
 - (3) after hours supervision
 - (4) resource libraries
 - (1) transportation
 - (2) therapy groups
 - (3) support groups for foster/adoptive parent networking
 - (4) *babysitting*
 - b. Contracts or agreements with in-state agencies for child specific recruitment, placement, and supervision services
 - c. Out-of-state placement and supervision services
 - d. *Adoption initiative to increase adoptive placements*
 - e. Statewide recruitment initiative including use of internet/media as recruitment tools
 - f. Clearance of TPR backlog
 - g. *Pre and Post Adoption Respite Service*
 - h. Case Management - Post Adoption In-home services
 - i. Adoptive Home Certification and Training by private agencies
 - j. OCS Resource Libraries
 - k. Video-taping of children free for adoption

C. Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)

Services that will continue to be supported by CAPTA are:

1. Develop and implement a statewide public relations and information campaign in order to improve the image of the Agency and agency staff with emphasis on positive aspects and outcomes.
2. Support a child fatality/serious injury prevention campaign and coordinate with OCS media section, child death review panels and appropriate child safety organizations.

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

3. Provide funding for Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Teams for the education of staff in each region regarding critical incidents and to be available in responding to post-incident trauma experienced by staff.
4. Coordinate agency efforts with that of private organizations in order to support prevention services within the state.
5. Continue the project in conjunction with Children's Hospital to assist with children who have been abandoned or who are at risk of abandonment due to maternal substance abuse or HIV illness in the mother and/or child.
6. Continue to provide specialized training to staff conducting out-of-home investigations including investigations of foster homes and residential facilities.
7. Support the activities of Citizen Review Panels.
8. Sustain the implementation system for statewide video conferencing consultation and training in order to reduce the downtime for staff participation.
1. Provide for the attendance of selected line staff, supervisors, and administrators to attend professional conferences and meetings which offer opportunities for training, planning and networking in child welfare issues.
10. Purchase supplies and equipment necessary for the provision of protective services to children.
11. To continue the implementation and evaluation of the Assessment Model.
12. To pilot Family Group Decision-Making in Louisiana.
13. To coordinate services and build linkages to providers of services for OCS clients who are victims of domestic violence.
14. Provide special training in the area of sexual abuse investigations and treatment interventions.

D. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program

Services that will continue to be supported under the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program are:

1. Assessment of existing programmatic and systemic barriers to the successful transition of a child in foster care into independent living.

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

2. Specialized training and consultation for foster parents and other child care providers to build skills in working with this specific population of foster children.
3. Training of staff on assessment, case planning, and implementation of independent living plans for foster children.
4. Services designed to enable participants to secure a high school diploma, its equivalent, higher educational opportunities, or appropriate vocational training.
5. Training in daily living skills, budgeting, locating and maintaining housing, and career planning.
6. Educational/vocational and individual/group counseling.
7. Integration and coordination of services otherwise available to participants and provide transportation to services when needed.
8. Establishment of outreach programs designed to attract individuals who are eligible to participate in the program.
9. Development for each participant, a written transitional independent living plan which is based on an assessment of needs, and which is incorporated into the case plan.
10. Provision of support services and assistance designed to improve each participant's transition.
11. Provision of a system for tracking expenditures and program outcomes to assure accountability.
- 12.** Develop services to provide room and board for eligible former foster children between 18 years of age up to 21 years of age in the young adult program.
13. Provision of a Youth Advisory Board to increase youth's input in development of services.

E. Unified Child and Family Services Continuum

All of the funding sources and programs which comprise the CFSP can be arrayed throughout the service continuum:

1. Services designed to assist in the healthy growth and development of children and their families.

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Child and Family Services Plan

Section 3 Planning

2. Services designed to support children and families in order to promote the competency of families, to alleviate stress, and enable families to use other resources and opportunities in the community.
3. Services designed to preserve families in the face of a crisis or chronic problems which threatens the safety and well-being of children.